

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I recently went to Student Services looking for information on the other universities. I was disgusted at the lack of information available. I commented on this and was told there was more information in the library. This is due to the fact that Student Services is not given funding to stock such material, but it is included in the library's budget.

I can't understand why such material would be in the library rather than Student Services. It would make more sense to have financial aid, graduate exam and university information at one location. It would also be beneficial to have this guidance counsellors to help answer any questions students might have about the information.

What is the problem of making this material more organized at one location, if funding is already provided for the acquisition of this material? Would there be a monumental problem in making this location Student Services?

Dianne Thompson

Dear Editor:

This letter is addressed to the person who signed her letter "Quebecoise in UPEI."

I must confess to being introduced to your letter by your critics. Having read their responses in more recent issues of X-Press, I went back to the October 3 issue to see just what you had said--all the while expecting to find an incendiary polemic. You can be sure I was as surprised at what you actually said as you must have been at some of the responses it evoked.

Apart from its moderation, the surprising thing about your letter was, first, its very existence. How many of us Anglo phones would have the language competence and the courage to speak our minds in a similar way: that is, in French, in a Quebec newspaper? The second surprise was the economy with which you summed up a central concern of your people: "We

want to re-gain that pride and equality feeling towards you, and toward ourselves." You mentioned 1763, the date of the treaty that handed Canada over to Britain; and you thereby implicitly reminded us that the motto on every Quebec car license plate--"Je me souviens"--is no accident. Conquered peoples have memories. And what could be more healthy and worthy of respect, after all, than a conquered people's desire to regain its pride?

It is because of the particular historical circumstances of Quebec--the cohesiveness of its majority language group, its feeling of distinctness, its resistance to assimilation--that so many Quebecois have retained a consciousness of themselves as a conquered, humiliated people. Many things have in Quebec in the last thirty years, yet you tell us the old feeling of being "losers," of needing to regain your self-respect, is still there.

It is only those of us who deny or have forgot our own defeats who could fail to understand this--which brings us to the point at last: namely, that the Quebecois are not the only "losers" in Canada today, if by "losers" we mean people whose ancestors once suffered defeat. One of the biggest such groups comprises a large part of the Anglophone population of the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario, namely the descendants of the "United Empire Loyalists," known by their enemies as "Tories," who came to Canada after their defeat in the American War of Independence.. Another such group is my own people the Irish, descendants of those who came in their hundreds of thousands, especially during the Great Hunger of the 1840's, after centuries of defeat and oppression in Ireland. One could go on and on, reciting a litany of such Canadian "losers."

My point is that Quebec's dominant language and culture are different all right, but that the old Quebecois defeat is not different at all; it is Canadian. As I see it, we Canadians are something more than mere squatters on one of the finest pieces of real estate on the planet: You and I and most of the others who live here with us are "losers," people whose ancestors were defeated and oppressed, but survived and endured and struggled and worked so that we, their children, could become, quite literally, the envy of the world.

What to do now? That is the question. It may be that the Quebecois will choose to form a separate country.